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SCIENTIFIC NEWS.¹

— The commemoration of the Heidelberg University semi-millennial leads the London Times to a comparison of the ages of the several German-speaking universities. The oldest is Prague, founded in 1348; next comes Vienna, founded in 1365; Heidelberg follows, being the senior of the universities in the German empire, founded in 1386; then Leipsic, in 1409; Freiburg (Baden), in 1454; Greifswald, in 1456; Bâle, in 1460; Munich, in 1472; Tübingen, in 1477; Marburg, in 1527; Königsberg, in 1544; Jena, in 1558; Würzburg, in 1582; Giessen, in 1607; Kiel, in 1665; Halle, in 1694; Breslau, in 1702; Göttingen, in 1737; Erlangen, in 1743; Berlin, in 1810; Bonn, in 1818; Zürich, in 1838; Berne, in 1834; Strasburg, reestablished in 1872, originally founded in 1567.

— The honorary degree of Ph.D. has been conferred by the University of Heidelberg, Germany, upon Alexander Graham Bell, of Washington; Professor Edward D. Cope, of Philadelphia; Professor Othniel Charles Marsh, of New Haven; Professor Simon Newcomb, superintendent of the Nautical Almanac at Washington, and John W. Powell, director of the Geological Survey.

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PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

PHILADELPHIA ACADEMY NATURAL SCIENCES, March 2, 1886.—Professor W. K. Brooks, of Baltimore, spoke upon the development of *Podocoryne*. The planula settles upon and spreads over the carapace of a hermit crab. Two hundred to three hundred hydras, like fresh-water hydras, differentiated as feeding polyps, are developed. Another form of hydra, with short tentacles packed with poisonous lasso-cells, is produced next in order. Then follow the blastostyles, which neither take food nor are defensive, but are the seat of the medusa buds, which increase until they are larger than the entire hydroid community to which they belong, and are ultimately set free. In *Podocoryne* these medusæ are not the ultimate sexual form, but produce buds which are set free, develop reproductive elements and reproduce the planula stage. The crops are all male or all female. In the *Geryonidæ* a single egg becomes a single sexual individual, but passes through the planula and hydroid stages, which are true embryonic states. The *Cunina* larval colony which infests the jellyfish, *Turritopsis*, ultimately develops into medusæ without alternation of generations; but another species of *Cunina*, the history of which has been traced by a Russian embryologist, remains a budding stolon, from which other hydras are produced. Professor Brooks believes that alternation of generations, viewed in the

¹ Edited by WM. HOSEA BALLOU, 265 Broadway, New York.